IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

In re Application of:		
	Stefan HUMMEL et al.	Examiner: Daniel S. Yeagley
For:	STEERING DEVICE FOR VEHICLES HAVING A PAIR OF WHEELS WHICH CAN BE STEERED FREELY BY MEANS OF LATERAL FORCES	
Filed:	December 5, 2006	Art Unit: 3611
Serial No.:	**10/549,399**	

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APPEAL BRIEF PURSUANT TO 37 C.F.R. § 41.37

SIR:

In the above-identified patent application ("the present application"), Appellants filed a Notice Of Appeal on February 24, 2010 from the Final Office Action issued by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office on November 17, 2009, so that the two-month appeal brief due date is April 26, 2010 (since April 24, 2010 is a Saturday).

In the Final Office Action, claims 11 to 24 were finally rejected. A Response After a Final Office Action was mailed on January 4, 2010, and an Advisory Action was mailed on January 29, 2010.

It is understood for purposes of the appeal that any Amendments to date have already been entered by the Examiner, and that the Response After Final does not require entry since it included no amendments.

As to the length of the "concise explanation" of the subject matter defined in each of the claims involved in the appeal (see 41.37), the "concise explanation" language is like the "concise explanation" requirement of former Rule 37 C.F.R. § 1.192. Accordingly, the length of the concise explanation provided is acceptable, since it would have been acceptable under 37 C.F.R. § 1.192 and since it specifically defines the subject matter of the independent claims involved and in the appeal. In the filing of many appeal briefs under the old rule for the present Assignee, the length of the "concise explanation" has always been ultimately accepted by the Patent Office.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that this Appeal Brief complies with 37 C.F.R. § 41.37. Although no longer required by the rules, this Brief is submitted in triplicate as a courtesy to the Appeals Board.

It is respectfully submitted that the final rejections of claims 11 to 24 should be reversed for the reasons explained below.

1. REAL PARTY IN INTEREST

The real party in interest in the present appeal is KNORR-BREMSE SYSTEME FUER NUTZFAHRZEUGE GMBH ("KNORR-BREMSE") of Muenchen in the Federal Republic of Germany. KNORR-BREMSE is the assignee of the entire right, title and interest in the present application.

2. RELATED APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

There are no interferences or other appeals related to the present application, which "will directly affect or be directly affected by or have a bearing on the Board's decision in the pending appeal".

3. STATUS OF CLAIMS

CLAIMS 1 TO 10 ARE CANCELED.

A. Claims 11 to 13, 16 to 18, 20, 21, 23 and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,244,226 ("Bergh") .

B. Claim 19 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Bergh in view of Buelt, U.S. Pat. No. 6,105,981.

C. Claims 14 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over the "Bergh" reference.

Appellants therefore appeal from the final rejections of pending claims 11 to 24. A copy of all of the pending and appealed claims 11 to 24 is attached hereto in the Claims Appendix.

4. STATUS OF AMENDMENTS

In response to the Final Office Action mailed on November 17, 2009, Appellants filed a Response After A Final Office Action (with no amendments), which was mailed on January 4, 2010.

It is understood for purposes of the appeal that any Amendments to date have already been entered by the Examiner, and that the Response After Final does not require entry since it included no amendments.

5. SUMMARY OF CLAIMED SUBJECT MATTER

The concise explanation of the summary of the claimed subject matter is as follows, as described in the context of the present application.

As to claim 11, it is to a steering device for a vehicle having a pair of wheels which can be steered freely as a function of the current driving state of the vehicle or whose steered position can be locked by an electronically actuatable locking device, the steering device including an electronic control device and sensors connected to the electronic control device to monitor current driving state values.

In this regard, Fig. 1 shows a vehicle 1 with a front axle which can be steered by the driver and which is formed by two wheels 2 and 3. The vehicle 1 also has a driven rear axle which is rigid and has rear wheels 4 and 5. "Behind" the rear axle, a lateral force steered trailing axle is formed by the wheels 6 and 7, which are coupled to one another of a steering mechanism 8. When cornering, the driver predefines a steering lock of the front wheels 2 and 3. When the vehicle travels in a stable way, the wheels 6 and 7, which are coupled of the steering mechanism 8, move freely. As a result of the lateral positive forces, which occur between the underlying surface and the wheels 6 and 7, a corresponding steering lock is brought about automatically at the lateral force steered axle. (See specification, pg. 6, lines 9 to 24 and Fig. 1).

Fig. 2 is an enlarged illustration of the vehicle of Fig. 1. Each of the wheels 2-7 is assigned a wheel sensor 9-14 for determining the wheel speeds V2-V7 and for determining the steering angles $\alpha 2$, $\alpha 3$, $\alpha 6$, $\alpha 7$ of the wheels 2, 3, 6, 7. The signals which are supplied by the sensors 9-14 are evaluated by an electronic control device 15. (See specification, pg. 6, line 28 to pg. 7, line 3 and Fig. 2). The two wheels 6 and 7 of the lateral force steered axle each have a steering lever 18 or 19, which is permanently connected to the wheel suspension. The two steering levers 18, 19 are connected to one another (in an articulated fashion) by a track rod 20. The steering lever 19 of the wheel 7 has an "extension" which serves as a locking lever 21. When the wheels 6, 7 make steering movement, the locking lever 21 swivels with them and the locking device 22 can lock the locking lever 21.

Therefore, both wheels 6 and 7 are "locked" by the locking device 22. The locking device 22 can be actuated electronically by the control device 15, (specifically, as a function of the velocity of the vehicle and a plurality of measured variables, which characterize the

driving stability and are sensed by sensors 9-14, 16, 17). (See specification, pg. 7, lines 14 to 30).

As to claim 11, it also includes the feature in which the electronic control device actuates the locking device when a minimum velocity of the vehicle is exceeded, so that a steered position of the pair of wheels is locked. The locking device 22 is actuatable electronically by the control device 15 as a function of the velocity of the vehicle. For example, for a bus with three axles, in which the central rear axle is driven and the last axle is steered by lateral force, and is locked from approximately 40 km/h by pneumatic or hydraulic cylinders. (See specification, pg. 8, lines 15 to 19).

As to claim 13, it also includes the feature in which the steered position of the pair of wheels is locked in critical driving situations. The locking device 22 can be actuated electronically by the control device 15 as a function of a plurality of measured variables, which characterize the driving stability and are sensed by sensors 9-14, 16, 17. For example, for a bus with three axles, in which the central rear axle is driven and the last axle is steered by lateral force, the bus has an electronic stability system for detecting oversteering. If the oversteering of the bus exceeds a specific threshold value, the locking mechanism is activated by the electronic control device by a digital output using a pneumatic or hydraulic valve, and the lateral force steered rear axle is locked. (See specification, pg. 8, lines 15 to 25).

As to claim 13, it also includes the feature in which after a critical driving situation, the locking device does not release the pair of wheels again until predefined critical driving state values are undershot at least for a predefined period of time. In this regard, after the lateral force steered rear axle is locked, an additional lateral guiding force builds up at the steered rear axle and stabilizes the vehicle. After the vehicle has been traveling straight ahead again in a stable fashion for a certain time (i.e. for a period of time of 3-5 sec), the locking mechanism and the rear axle steering system are released again. (See specification, pg. 8, lines 25 to 31).

In summary, the presently claimed subject matter is to a steering device for a vehicle having a pair of wheels which can be steered freely as a function of the current driving state of the vehicle or whose steered position can be locked by an electronically actuatable locking device, the steering device including an electronic control device and sensors connected to the electronic control device to monitor current driving state values; wherein the electronic

control device actuates the locking device when a minimum velocity of the vehicle is exceeded, so that a steered position of the pair of wheels is locked, driving state values which characterize critical driving situations are stored in the electronic control device, the steered position of the pair of wheels is locked in critical driving situations, and after a critical driving situation, the locking device does not release the pair of wheels again until predefined critical driving state values are undershot at least for a predefined period of time. (See claim 11).

Finally, the appealed claims include no means-plus-function language and no step-plus-function claims, so that 37 C.F.R. 41.37(v) is satisfied as to its specific requirements for such claims, since none are present here. Also, the present application does not contain any step-plus-function claims because the method claims in the present application are not "step plus function" claims because they do not recite "a step for", as required by the Federal Circuit and as stated in Section 2181 of the MPEP.

6. GROUNDS OF REJECTION TO BE REVIEWED ON APPEAL

A. Whether claims 11 to 13, 16 to 18, 20, 21, 23 and 24 are anticipated under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) by U.S. Patent No. 5,244,226 ("Bergh").

B. Whether claim 19 is unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Bergh in view of Buelt, U.S. Pat. No. 6,105,981.

C. Whether claims 14 and 22 are unpatentable under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over the "Bergh" reference.

7. ARGUMENT

A. THE ANTICIPATION REJECTIONS OF CLAIMS 11 TO 13, 16 TO 18, 20, 21, 23 AND 24

Claims 11 to 13, 16 to 18, 20, 21, 23 and 24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,244,226 ("Bergh").

As regards the anticipation rejections of the claims, to reject a claim under 35 U.S.C. § 102, the Office must demonstrate that each and every claim feature is identically described

or contained in a single prior art reference. (See *Scripps Clinic & Research Foundation v. Genentech, Inc.*, 18 U.S.P.Q.2d 1001, 1010 (Fed. Cir. 1991)). As explained herein, it is respectfully submitted that the prior Office Action does not meet this standard, for example, as to all of the features of the claims. Still further, not only must each of the claim features be identically described, an anticipatory reference must also enable a person having ordinary skill in the art to practice the claimed subject matter. (See *Akzo, N.V. v. U.S.I.T.C.*, 1 U.S.P.Q.2d 1241, 1245 (Fed. Cir. 1986)).

Also, to the extent that the Office Actions to date may be relying on the inherency doctrine, it is respectfully submitted that to rely on inherency, the Office must provide a "basis in fact and/or technical reasoning to reasonably support the determination that the allegedly inherent characteristics *necessarily* flows from the teachings of the applied art." (See M.P.E.P. § 2112; emphasis in original; and see *Ex parte Levy*, 17 U.S.P.Q.2d 1461, 1464 (Bd. Pat. App. & Int'f. 1990)). Thus, the M.P.E.P. and the case law make clear that simply because a certain result or characteristic may occur in the prior art does not establish the inherency of that result or characteristic.

CLAIMS 11 TO 13, 16 TO 18, 20, 21, 23 AND 24

As to claim 11, it includes the feature in which "the locking device does not release the pair of wheels again until predefined critical driving state values are undershot at least for a predefined period of time". The Final Office Action (at pg. 3) conclusorily asserts that Bergh (col. 8, lines 14 to 20) somehow shows this feature by supposedly providing that a critical value (17 mph) is undershot for a predefined period of time (deadband time frame), such that the predetermined period of time is the deadband time needed to undershoot the critical driving state value of 20 mph.

In fact, however, it is believed and respectfully submitted that the Bergh reference does not disclose a locking device, which does not release the pair of wheels again until predefined critical driving state values are undershot at least for a predefined period of time, as provided for in the context of the presently claimed subject matter. In this regard, Bergh states that "a 'deadband' (and not a "deadband **time frame,**" as asserted in the Final Office Action) is provided so that steering is reengaged at a slightly lower speed to avoid unnecessary switching right around the 20 mph setting." (See col. 8, lines 18 to 20 (emphasis added)). This is because the "deadband" of Bergh does not refer to a time frame --

but rather to a ***speed range*** *of 17 mph to 20 mph within which the steering is not reengaged despite the critical value of 20 mph being undershot*.

Therefore, the Bergh device, upon undershooting the first critical driving state value of 20 mph, **does not wait a predefined period of time until reengaging the steering (as with the presently claimed subject matter of claim 11), since it instead waits until a second critical driving state value of 17 mph is reached before the steering is reengaged.**

The Final Office Action (at pg. 6) conclusorily also asserts that Bergh uses set point values (20 mph and 17 mph) which generate a range that creates the dead band region for the control of the Bergh locking structure to cut-in and cut-out, in which the dead band region is directly proportional to a period of time it takes to reduce the speed which provides a time delay set by the lower predefined set point value and the time period generated in this dead band between these set points values directly depends upon and is proportional to the set point values.

In fact, however, even if the "the dead band region is directly proportional to a period of time it takes to reduce the speed which provides a time delay set by the lower predefined set point value" (as asserted), this does not establish a "predefined time period". This is because in Bergh, the "period of time it takes to reduce the speed" **is a variable**. For example, after undershooting the first critical driving state value of 20 mph *it is not certain what time would elapse (depending on road conditions, the brakes, the driver, etc.) between undershooting the first critical driving state value of 20 mph and undershooting the second critical driving state value of 17 mph, in fact the second critical driving state value of 17 mph may never be reached if the vehicle accelerates again.*

Therefore, this elapsed time is certainly not a "predefined time period" as provided for in the context of the subject matter of claim 11. Furthermore, the Bergh device, upon undershooting the second critical driving state value of 17 mph, also does not wait a predefined period of time until reengaging the steering, since the steering is immediately reengaged at that point.

The Advisory Action conclusorily asserts (at continuation of 11) that at least a predefined period of time would be required to respond to a drop from 20 mph to 17 mph depending upon a decelerating speed function, but regardless would have at least a predefined response time period. *However, as explained above, a* ***time period*** *is not the same as a "**predefined time period**". In fact the Advisory Action essentially admits this fact by stating that according to Bergh, the period of time required to respond to a drop from 20 mph to 17*

*mph **depends** upon a decelerating speed function and is therefore not "predefined" as provided for in the context of the presently claimed subject matter.*

Accordingly, claim 11, as presented, is allowable, as are its dependent claims 12, 13, 16 to 18, 20, 21, 23 and 24.

It is therefore respectfully requested that the anticipation rejections of claims 11 to 13, 16 to 18, 20, 21, 23 and 24 be withdrawn.

B. THE OBVIOUSNESS REJECTION OF CLAIM 19

Claim 19 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Bergh in view of Buelt, U.S. Pat. No. 6,105,981.

To reject a claim under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), the Office bears the initial burden of presenting a *prima facie* case of obviousness. *In re Rijckaert*, 9 F.3d 1531, 1532, 28 U.S.P.Q.2d 1955, 1956 (Fed. Cir. 1993). To establish *prima facie* obviousness, three criteria must be satisfied. First, there must be some suggestion or motivation to modify or combine reference teachings. *In re Fine*, 837 F.2d 1071, 5 U.S.P.Q.2d 1596 (Fed. Cir. 1988). This teaching or suggestion to make the claimed combination must be found in the prior art and not based on the application disclosure. *In re Vaeck*, 947 F.2d 488, 20 U.S.P.Q.2d 1438 (Fed. Cir. 1991).

Also, as clearly indicated by the Supreme Court in *KSR*, it is "important to identify a reason that would have prompted a person of ordinary skill in the relevant field to combine the [prior art] elements" in the manner claimed. *See KSR Int'l Co. v. Teleflex, Inc.*, 127 S. Ct. 1727 (2007). In this regard, the Supreme Court further noted that "rejections on obviousness cannot be sustained by mere conclusory statements; instead, there must be some articulated reasoning with some rational underpinning to support the legal conclusion of obviousness." *Id.*, at 1396. Second, there must be a reasonable expectation of success. *In re Merck & Co., Inc.*, 800 F.2d 1091, 231 U.S.P.Q. 375 (Fed. Cir. 1986). Third, the prior art reference(s) must teach or suggest all of the claim features. *In re Royka*, 490 F.2d 981, 180 U.S.P.Q. 580 (C.C.P.A. 1974).

CLAIM 19

Claim 19 depends from claim 11, and it is therefore allowable for essentially the same reasons, since the secondary Buelt reference does not cure -- and is not asserted to cure -- the deficiencies of the Bergh reference as explained above.

Accordingly, claim 19 is allowable, and it is therefore respectfully requested that the obviousness rejection be withdrawn.

C. THE OBVIOUSNESS REJECTION OF CLAIMS 14 AND 22

Claims 14 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Bergh.

CLAIMS 14 AND 22

Claims 14 and 22 depend ultimately from claim 11, and they are therefore allowable for essentially the same reasons, since the arguments regarding the asserted obviousness of the 3 to 5 second time range do not cure -- and are not asserted to cure -- the deficiencies of the Bergh reference as explained above.

Accordingly, claims 14 and 22 are allowable, and it is therefore respectfully requested that the obviousness rejections of these claims be withdrawn.

Accordingly, claims 11 to 24 are allowable.

As further regards all of the obviousness rejections, as to any Official Notice, the Examiner never provided any specific evidence to establish those assertions and/or contentions that may be supported by any Official Notices under 37 C.F.R. § 1.104(d)(2) or otherwise. In particular, it was respectfully requested that the Examiner provide an affidavit and/or that the Examiner provide published information concerning any such assertions.

Also regarding all of the obviousness rejections, it is respectfully submitted that the cases of In re Fine, supra, and In re Jones, 21 U.S.P.Q.2d 1941 (Fed. Cir. 1992), make plain that the Office's generalized assertions that it would have been obvious to modify or combine the references do not properly support a § 103 rejection. It is respectfully submitted that those cases make plain that the Answer reflects a subjective "obvious to try" standard, and

therefore does not reflect the proper evidence to support an obviousness rejection based on the references relied upon. In particular, the Court in the case of In re Fine stated that:

> The PTO has the burden under section 103 to establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness. It can satisfy this burden only by showing some objective teaching in the prior art or that knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art would lead that individual to combine the relevant teachings of the references. This it has not done. . . .
>
> **Instead, the Examiner relies on hindsight in reaching his obviousness determination. . . . One cannot use hindsight reconstruction to pick and choose among isolated disclosures in the prior art to deprecate the claimed invention.**

In re Fine, 5 U.S.P.Q.2d at 1598 to 1600 (citations omitted; italics in original; emphasis added). Likewise, the Court in the case of In re Jones stated that:

> Before the PTO may combine the disclosures of two or more prior art references in order to establish *prima facie* obviousness, there must be some suggestion for doing so, found either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art. . . .
>
> **Conspicuously missing from this record is any evidence, other than the PTO's speculation (if it be called evidence) that one of ordinary skill . . . would have been motivated to make the modifications . . . necessary to arrive at the claimed [invention].**

In re Jones, 21 U.S.P.Q.2d at 1943, 1944 (citations omitted; italics in original).

That is exactly the case here since it is believed and respectfully submitted that the Office Actions to date offer no evidence whatsoever, but only conclusory hindsight, reconstruction and speculation, which these cases have indicated does not constitute evidence that will support a proper obviousness finding. Unsupported assertions are not evidence as to why a person having ordinary skill in the art would be motivated to modify or combine references to provide the claimed subject matter of the claims to address the problems met thereby. Accordingly, the Office must provide proper evidence of a motivation for modifying or combining the references to provide the claimed subject matter.

Also, the Federal Circuit in the case of In re Kotzab has made plain that even if a claim concerns a "technologically simple concept" — which is not the case here — there still must be some finding as to the "specific understanding or principle within the knowledge of a skilled artisan" that would motivate a person having no knowledge of the claimed subject matter to "make the combination in the manner claimed," stating that:

> In this case, the Examiner and the Board fell into the hindsight trap. The idea of a single sensor controlling multiple valves, as opposed to multiple sensors controlling multiple valves, is a technologically simple concept. With this simple concept in mind, the Patent and Trademark Office found prior art statements that in the abstract appeared to suggest the claimed limitation. But, there was no finding as to the specific understanding or principle within the knowledge of a skilled artisan that would have motivated one with no knowledge of Kotzab's invention to make the combination in the manner claimed. In light of our holding of the absence of a motivation to combine the teachings in Evans, we conclude that the Board did not make out a proper prima facie case of obviousness in rejecting [the] claims . . . under 35 U.S.C. Section 103(a) over Evans.

In re Kotzab, 55 U.S.P.Q.2d 1313, 1318 (Fed. Cir. 2000) (emphasis added). Here again, there have been no such findings to establish that the features discussed above of the rejected claims are met by the reference relied upon. As referred to above, any review of the reference, whether taken alone or combined, makes plain that the reference simply does not describe the features discussed above of the rejected claims.

As still further regards all of the obviousness rejections of the claims, it is respectfully submitted that a proper *prima facie* case has not been made in the present case for obviousness, since the Office Actions to date never made any findings, such as, for example, regarding in any way whatsoever what a person having ordinary skill in the art would have been at the time the claimed subject matter of the present application was made. (See *In re Rouffet*, 47 U.S.P.Q.2d 1453, 1455 (Fed. Cir. 1998) (the "factual predicates underlying" a *prima facie* "obviousness determination include the scope and content of the prior art, the differences between the prior art and the claimed invention, and the level of ordinary skill in the art")).

It is respectfully submitted that the proper test for showing obviousness is what the "combined teachings, knowledge of one of ordinary skill in the art, and the nature of the problem to be solved as a whole would have suggested to those of ordinary skill in the art", and that the Patent Office must provide particular findings in this regard — the evidence for which does not include "broad conclusory statements standing alone". (See *In re Kotzab*, 55 U.S.P.Q. 2d 1313, 1317 (Fed. Cir. 2000) (citing *In re Dembiczak*, 50 U.S.P.Q.2d 1614, 1618 (Fed. Cir. 1999) (obviousness rejections reversed where no findings were made "concerning the identification of the relevant art", the "level of ordinary skill in the art" or "the nature of

the problem to be solved"))). It is respectfully submitted that there has been no such showings by the Office Actions to date or by the Advisory Action.

In fact, the present lack of any of the required factual findings forces both Appellants and this Appeals Board to resort to unwarranted speculation to ascertain exactly what facts underly the present obviousness rejections. The law mandates that the allocation of the proof burdens requires that the Patent Office provide the factual basis for rejecting a patent application under 35 U.S.C. § 103. (See *In re Piasecki*, 745 F.2d 1468, 1472, 223 U.S.P.Q. 785, 788 (Fed. Cir. 1984) (citing *In re Warner*, 379 F.2d 1011, 1016, 154 U.S.P.Q. 173, 177 (C.C.P.A. 1967))). In short, the Examiner bears the initial burden of presenting a proper prima facie unpatentability case — which has not been met in the present case. (See *In re Oetiker*, 977 F.2d 1443, 1445, 24, U.S.P.Q.2d 1443, 1444 (Fed. Cir. 1992)).

Accordingly, claims 11 to 24 are allowable, and the rejections should therefore be reversed.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above, it is respectfully requested that the rejections of the finally rejected claims 11 to 24 be reversed, and that these claims be allowed as presented.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: 4/26/2010

By: _____
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CLAIMS APPENDIX

1-10. (Canceled).

11. A steering device for a vehicle having a pair of wheels which can be steered freely as a function of the current driving state of the vehicle or whose steered position can be locked by an electronically actuatable locking device, the steering device comprising:

an electronic control device;

sensors connected to the electronic control device to monitor current driving state values;

wherein:

the electronic control device actuates the locking device when a minimum velocity of the vehicle is exceeded, so that a steered position of the pair of wheels is locked,

driving state values which characterize critical driving situations are stored in the electronic control device,

the steered position of the pair of wheels is locked in critical driving situations, and

after a critical driving situation, the locking device does not release the pair of wheels again until predefined critical driving state values are undershot at least for a predefined period of time.

12. The steering device of claim 11, wherein combinations of the driving state values which characterize the critical driving situations are stored in the electronic control device.

13. The steering device of claim 11, wherein the critical driving situations are assumed to be present when the vehicle tends to oversteer.

14. The steering device of claim 11, wherein the period of time is 3 seconds to 5 seconds.

15. The steering device of claim 11, wherein the electronic control device is integrated into an electronic driving stability system, and an activation of the locking device occurs at a same time as an engine torque intervention or braking intervention which is controlled by the electronic driving stability system.

16. The steering device of claim 11, wherein each wheel of the pair of wheels are arranged on opposite sides of the vehicle, and each wheel of the pair of wheels includes a steering lever, which are articulatedly connected to one another by a track rod.

17. The steering device of claim 16, wherein the locking device acts on one of the two steering levers.

18. The steering device of claim 16, wherein one of the two steering levers includes a locking lever which lengthens the steering lever, and the locking device acts on the locking lever.

19. The steering device of claim 11, wherein the locking device is actuatable pneumatically.

20. The steering device of claim 11, wherein the locking device is actuatable hydraulically.

21. The steering device of claim 11, wherein combinations of the driving state values which characterize the critical driving situations are stored in the electronic control device, wherein the critical driving situations are assumed to be present when the vehicle tends to oversteer, wherein the electronic control device is integrated into an electronic driving stability system, and an activation of the locking device occurs at a same time as an engine torque intervention or braking intervention which is controlled by the electronic driving stability system, and wherein each wheel of the pair of wheels are arranged on opposite sides

of the vehicle, and each wheel of the pair of wheels includes a steering lever, which are articulatedly connected to one another by a track rod.

22. The steering device of claim 21, wherein the period of time is 3 seconds to 5 seconds, and wherein the locking device is actuatable one of pneumatically and hydraulically.

23. The steering device of claim 21, wherein the locking device acts on one of the two steering levers.

24. The steering device of claim 21, wherein one of the two steering levers includes a locking lever which lengthens the steering lever, and the locking device acts on the locking lever.

EVIDENCE APPENDIX

Appellants have not submitted any evidence pursuant to 37 CFR Sections 1.130, 1.131 or 1.132, and do not rely upon evidence entered by the Examiner.

RELATED PROCEEDINGS INDEX

There are no interferences or other appeals related to the present application.